



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

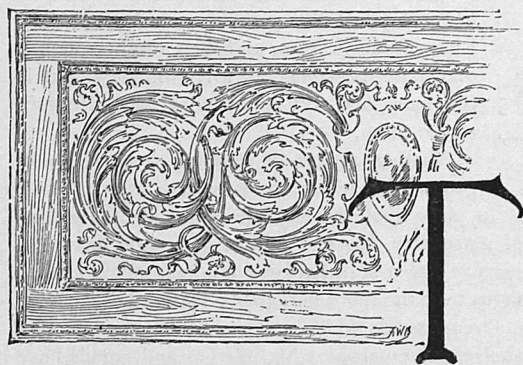
We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE HOUSE

HINTS FOR HOME DECORATION AND FURNISHING.



pose, and while I like above all things a high, panelled wainscot of oak or ash, it is, for a moderate-sized country house, much too expensive, and would be "out of scale" with the matters I am discussing here.

I have employed many cheaper expedients, and found them, as a rule, both decorative and serviceable, such as "staving;" that is, narrow tongued and grooved strips of pine or some harder wood, set carefully against the plastered wall and capped with a good moulding for a chair-rail. If the vertical lines are an objection the staving may be set at an angle of 45°, and divided by flat mouldings so arranged that they separate the staving into panels of diagonal lines of alternate direction.

A pleasing variety is obtained by using strips of different widths, say 2½ inches and 6 inches. The surface of the 6-inch strips had best be reeded, unless the wood employed has a well-marked grain. Should the height still be too apparent, the cap moulding may be used a second time a trifle lower down, this securing a double horizontal line. If this is done, it will be necessary to study the panelling in relation to the reduced height of the staving, for the space between the two mouldings at the top should be a plain or reeded board 6 or 8 inches wide.

A pretty wainscot for a hall is composed of shingles. At first thought this may seem crude and rough; and indeed I think it entirely out of place in any room, save a country house hall or smoking-room. But if the shingles are of small and uniform size, carefully cut and neatly laid and stained, they give a charming effect. They may be scalloped, rounded, or cut in various shapes, and may be run to the floor or stop on a base, but they must be finished on top with a cap moulding.

Both India and China matting I have found excellent substitutes for wood in wainscot; and although this is by no means an original conception, I believe that the opportunities offered by the use of the material have not been fully appreciated.

A plain surface of matting, perhaps, is what you want, and you wish to use it so as to avoid trouble and expense. You will save neither the trouble nor the expense; for matting is subject to atmospheric changes, and if put upon the wall and held only at top and bottom it will sag. But this can be avoided by cutting up the spaces into panels or simply crossing the matting at intervals by a 6-inch reeded strip of wood; and once we begin upon this subdivision of spaces the possible combinations are infinite. The panels may be long and narrow, square, vertical, horizontal, large or small, and, in short, any combination of squares and rectangles that skill can control is applicable to this surface.

Instead of the wooden strips used to cover the nail-heads which hold the matting in place, I have often made a virtue of necessity and used the nails themselves, and with these new elements one can form patterns that are not only simple but may be highly complicated; for circles, oblongs, running ornament, floral work, and almost any outline design are possible, depending always upon the limitations of the surface to be covered.

All that applies to matting as dados applies to matting used for friezes, and many pretty devices have been worked out with nails upon a surface of matting used for that purpose. I

II.

HERE is much to be said in praise of the dado or wainscot for the hall, and it had best be composed of some material that will not be injured by a flurry of snow or rain which may be blown in by an intrusive gust of wind, and that will defy the ravages of the careless expressman, for the angles of a trunk play sad havoc with unprotected plaster. Wood is, of course, the best material for the pur-

found ornamental nail-heads of an attractive design in several sizes, and on one frieze where the pattern was a rather formal garland I used six different sizes of nails, varying from half an inch to one and one half inches in diameter. If the surface to be covered is comparatively small, a Persian effect can be obtained by the use of brass, copper and iron nails with a strongly marked Persian design. This is an unusually interesting decoration for the panels of a small cabinet or for the panels of the hall doors. But the placing of so many nails requires an unlimited display of patience.

To return to the matting. Remember it can be obtained

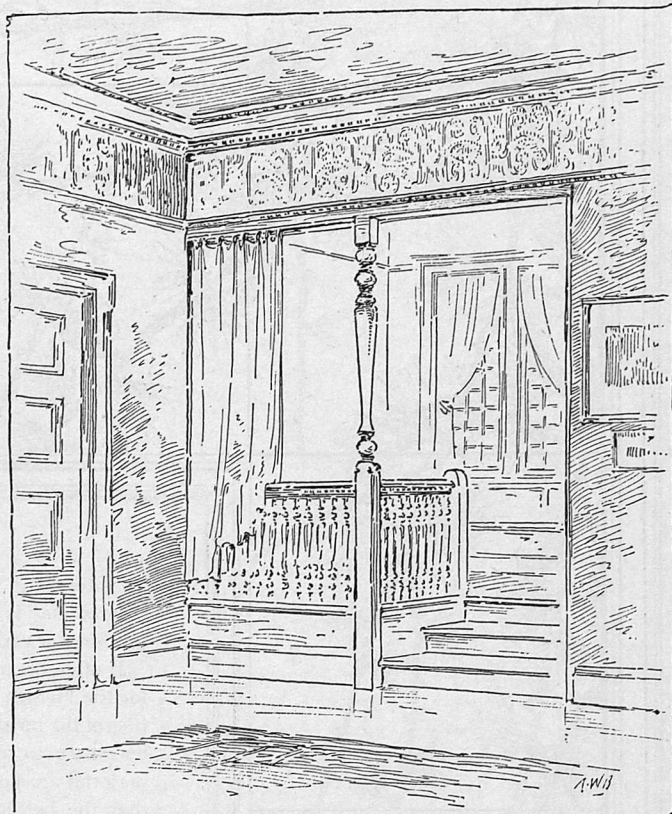
in many colors, dark green, red, brown and yellow, besides many patterns in two or more colors. Some of these patterns at once suggest the use of nails, and copper or brass-headed nails placed at regular intervals in the pattern produce an effective and serviceable dado.

Some of the split bamboo made by the Japanese for window-shades is also used for this purpose; but the objection to such a dado in a much-used room is that it is too readily torn from the wall because of the many openings between the strips.

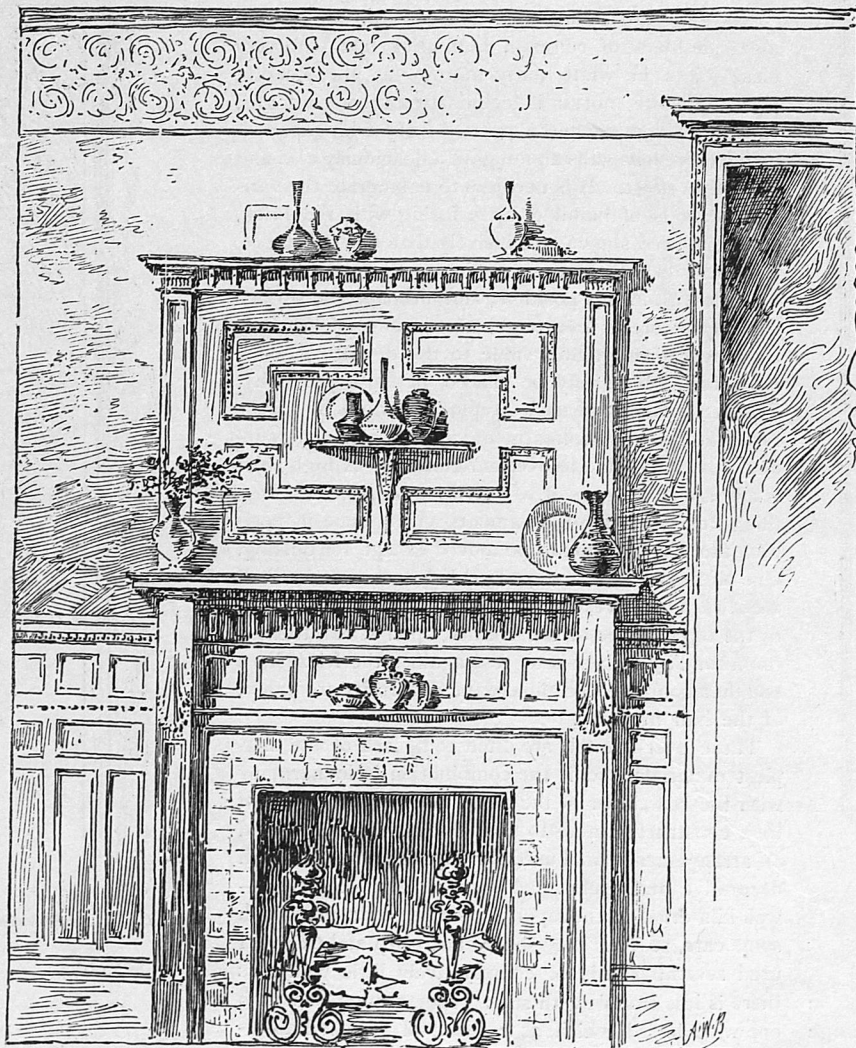
Let us now discuss the fireplace and the staircase. The former, although not an absolute necessity, is by far the most attractive feature of the hall, and we will consider it as the starting-point in our scheme of decoration.

As I have said before, a chimney may not be possible in the hall, from considerations of compact planning; but if it has a place among the permanent features of this room, the decoration which it receives will certainly give the key to all of the other elements. Many instances are to be found where the chimney-piece has no connection with the remainder of the apartment. This is quite unnecessary even in reconstructing an old room, if we take our mantelpiece as the key-stone; for, indeed, the very lines which form the mantelpiece divisions will, some of them, serve us as the divisions for wainscot or frieze. Oftentimes in small houses the chimney breast is narrow and one cannot indulge in the low broad fireplace, which is, perhaps, the most attractive for a hall. In such a case the effect of breadth must be obtained by the liberal employment of horizontal divisions both in the tile or brick facing and in the over-mantel.

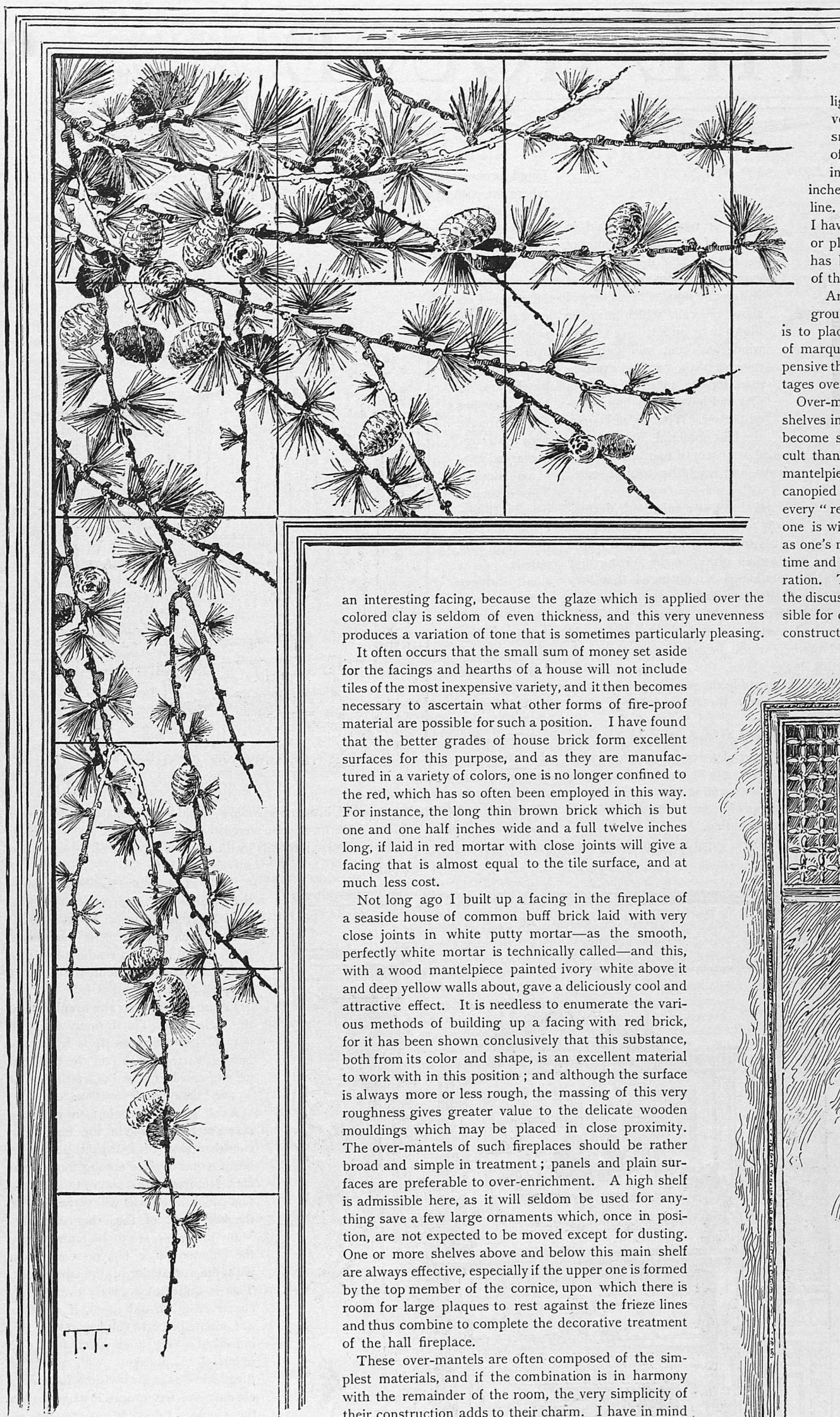
Tiles are by far the best decorative material for hearths and facings that



TREATMENT OF AN ALCOVE.



TILE-FACED MANTEL AND OVER-MANTEL OF OAK OR ASH.



DESIGN FOR TILE FIREPLACE FACING.

can be procured, and these may or may not be expensive, according to the selection. A large surface of simple tile of one tone of color is almost always full of sufficient variety to insure

an interesting facing, because the glaze which is applied over the colored clay is seldom of even thickness, and this very unevenness produces a variation of tone that is sometimes particularly pleasing.

It often occurs that the small sum of money set aside for the facings and hearths of a house will not include tiles of the most inexpensive variety, and it then becomes necessary to ascertain what other forms of fire-proof material are possible for such a position. I have found that the better grades of house brick form excellent surfaces for this purpose, and as they are manufactured in a variety of colors, one is no longer confined to the red, which has so often been employed in this way. For instance, the long thin brown brick which is but one and one half inches wide and a full twelve inches long, if laid in red mortar with close joints will give a facing that is almost equal to the tile surface, and at much less cost.

Not long ago I built up a facing in the fireplace of a seaside house of common buff brick laid with very close joints in white putty mortar—as the smooth, perfectly white mortar is technically called—and this, with a wood mantelpiece painted ivory white above it and deep yellow walls about, gave a deliciously cool and attractive effect. It is needless to enumerate the various methods of building up a facing with red brick, for it has been shown conclusively that this substance, both from its color and shape, is an excellent material to work with in this position; and although the surface is always more or less rough, the massing of this very roughness gives greater value to the delicate wooden mouldings which may be placed in close proximity. The over-mantels of such fireplaces should be rather broad and simple in treatment; panels and plain surfaces are preferable to over-enrichment. A high shelf is admissible here, as it will seldom be used for anything save a few large ornaments which, once in position, are not expected to be moved except for dusting. One or more shelves above and below this main shelf are always effective, especially if the upper one is formed by the top member of the cornice, upon which there is room for large plaques to rest against the frieze lines and thus combine to complete the decorative treatment of the hall fireplace.

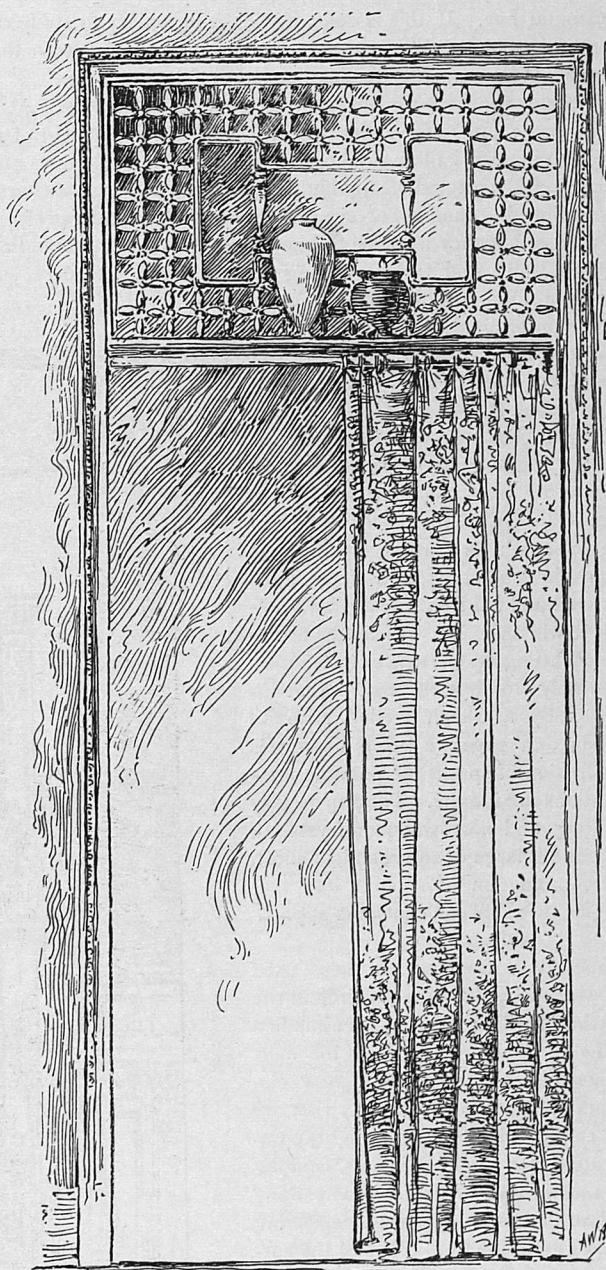
These over-mantels are often composed of the simplest materials, and if the combination is in harmony with the remainder of the room, the very simplicity of their construction adds to their charm. I have in mind an arrangement that I used for myself and found both decorative and useful. A number of pine boards—well kiln-dried, as the saying is—were put together with some care, so that they should not warp and twist. I used several boards of comparatively little width, as there is less trouble with such a construction than with one wide board, which, as a result of personal observation, I can say, is apt to crack and split if kept in a warm room.

The dimensions were such that my over-mantel fitted the chimney

breast in width, and in height it was some three feet above the shelf-line. This I covered with gray blue linen velours, a material which has a soft surface like velvet and yet catches the light in much the same way as plush. The velours was carefully stretched down to a smooth surface, and held in place by plenty of tacks. At the top I put an oak moulding which served as a cornice, and six inches below a wooden head to finish the frieze line. Against this surface, as a background, I have hung first one and then another picture or plaster bas-relief as I felt inclined, and it has been, and still is, a very attractive feature of the room.

Another means of securing a good background for picture or mounted animal heads is to place upon the wall above the shelf a section of marquetry flooring, which, although more expensive than a stuff background, has evident advantages over the more perishable material.

Over-mantels which are composed of a series of shelves interspersed with mirrors and panels have become so numerous and ugly that it is more difficult than ever to design a pleasing bric-à-brac mantelpiece. Cabinets and small shelves with canopied tops and bad carving are to be found in every "ready-made" house of our time, and unless one is willing to put up with just such an interior as one's neighbor possesses, he must devote a little time and study to the details of his interior decoration. Therefore I have taken up at some length the discussion of over-mantels to show that it is possible for one to employ very simple elements in their construction and yet produce a satisfactory result.



SPINDLE TRANSOM AND SHELF OVER DOORWAY.

This is quite as true of the staircase as of the mantelpiece, and if but a little money is to be

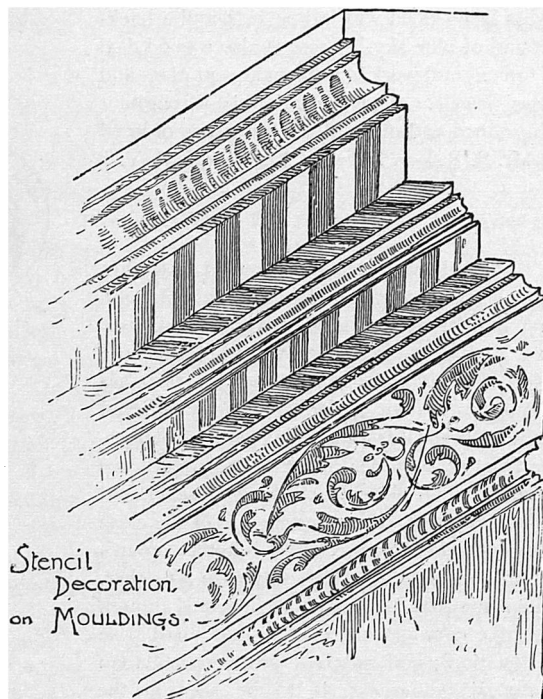
expended upon the hall, a goodly portion of that sum should be devoted to making the stairs easy of ascent and attractive in appearance. Without encroaching upon the province of the stairbuilder, I must say a word in praise of the "open string" as opposed to the "closed string" method of building staircases. In short, this discussion resolves itself into the practical question of an endless fight with dust as against a little more expense at the outset. An open string costs more to begin with, but the closed string renders necessary a greater outlay of patience and time. So I urge the open string with plenty of balusters to complete the decorative effect. It is not necessary to adhere to the ancient custom of setting a row of balusters exactly alike from the top to the bottom of the stairs, for if a little thought is devoted to the turning of these same supports to the hand-rail, they may become very unusual, and by as simple a proceeding as possible. Have the baluster turned in such a way that it will look as well upside down as it does when used upright. Also combine the parts of the turning in such a way that the unequal lengths of the balusters—a necessity from the fact that the steps are not parallel with the hand-rail—shall form little figures and patterns, and shall make composition of balls and twists that will repeat at regular intervals up the staircase.

From the turned balusters it is but a step to the light screen, which I advocated last month, and wish to call more attention to here.

Spindle work is only expensive when it requires much time in the putting together of the various parts; the spindles themselves are only turned sticks of wood, and here again the same argument can be urged for variety as in the case of the baluster. It is not well, of course, to allow your spindle to be of too great length, as it is naturally a slender bit of wood and easily broken, so that horizontal divisions are a necessity to the construction. In much of the expensive work and in all of the ancient Egyptian spindle or meshrebiya work these intermediate pieces were extremely minute and numerous; but that is out of our province, as the labor of putting the parts together is very great in such work, and we are only considering here *good* but inexpensive woodwork. A pretty device for screening a part of the stairs is to allow the first run of the flight to remain exposed in the usual way, and as one reaches the landing whence the second run extends, to contrive so that one finds himself in a half-screened recess, from one side of which he can look down

wood, and if the subject were not so well written up already, I should indulge in a bit of historical reminiscence in which Egypt of the fifteenth and sixteenth century would form the central feature; for to that time and that country we are indebted for this most decorative element of spindle work.

Before leaving the subject of decorative woodwork



and permanent decoration, I have a word to say about the designs that accompany these articles. It will be noticed that in many of them the mouldings are enriched. The temptation to do this is too great to be resisted, as the principal lines of a design can thus be accentuated, and without them the drawing is apt to look bare and uninteresting. There are various ways of enriching mouldings; the usual and most expensive manner is, of course, that of carving, and even if the enthusiastic seeker after beauty be himself an amateur woodcarver, he will prefer to expend his time and talents upon a panel or a similar surface rather than upon interminable lengths of repeated forms; and, by the way, the panels will be of much greater decorative service in a country house than the same amount of carving devoted to the accentuation of moulded surfaces.

The possessor of a turning lathe, however, may devote his leisure hours to good purpose and with almost as happy results as the carver; for turned mouldings, if skilfully designed, are an agreeable substitute for carved ones.

The ornament may be turned of such a size as to admit of being halved or even quartered if the design will permit, so that great lengths can be obtained at little expense. Still another way to decorate a moulding is to work a stencil pattern over it. This is the simplest method to pursue to acquire a decorated surface for a moulding. Of course a simple contour must be chosen, such as half rounds, flat surfaces of simple curvature or perfectly square fans. The accompanying sketch presents some of the possible ways of employing this method of enriching mouldings.

I do not wish to be understood hereby as urging any imitation of carving in painting, for this painting must be *flat*, and no shadows or fictitious light and shade should be indicated.

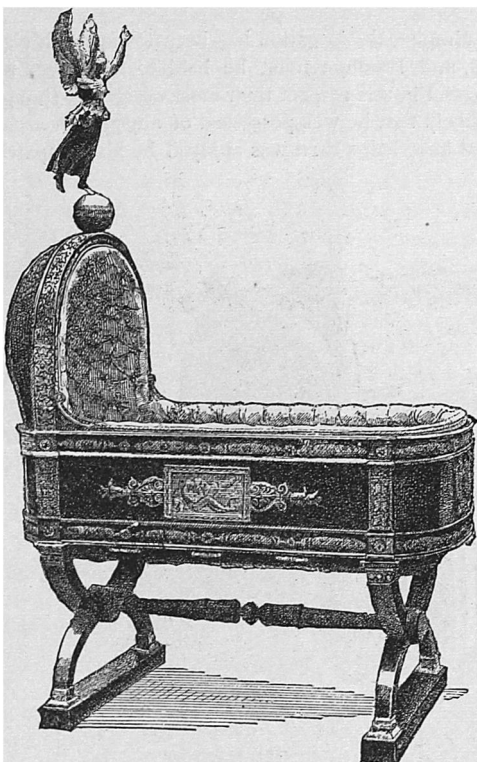
The patterns that are obtainable for this purpose are without number, but those that are perhaps best suited to such a use are to be found worked out in stone in many of the Venetian buildings and palaces; the motives of these patterns are of the simplest nature, but, as is the case with much good decorative work, the very simplic-

ity of the idea is its charm. I prefer for the purpose rather formal and set designs, while the stencil pattern for a flat surface or frieze may be as free and elaborate as good taste will allow. The turned moulding just spoken of can hardly be objected to on the ground of imitation, for the turner is in his legitimate sphere, and the daintily fashioned spindle or baluster, which is possible with a skilful workman does not encroach upon the province of the woodcarver or in any way lessen the value of carving.

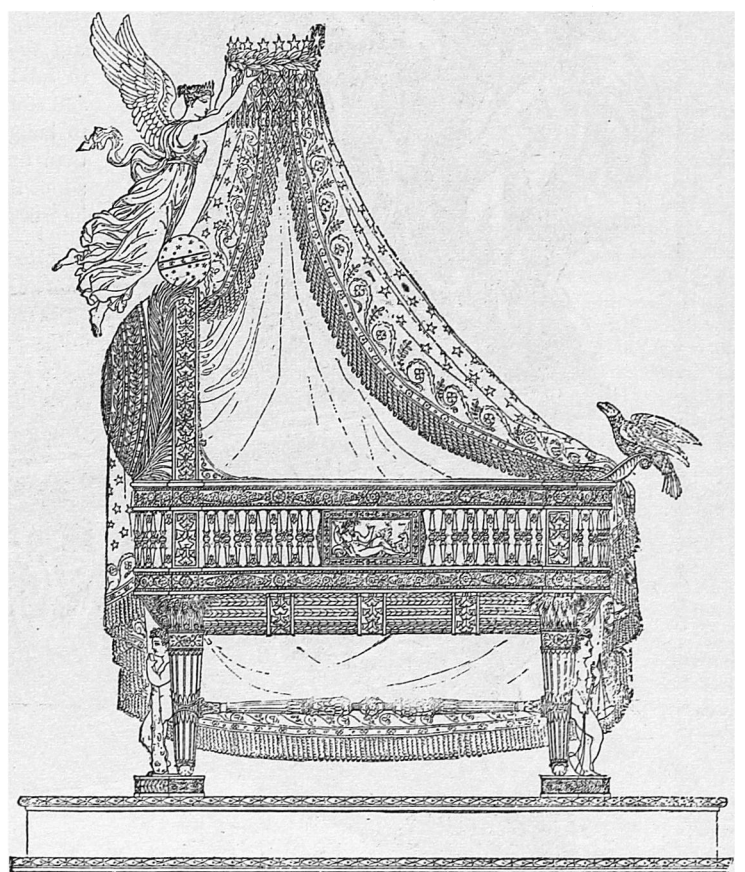
Before stepping into another field of decorative work, I must say one more word in praise of the use of nail-heads in decoration. I will admit that time and patience are an absolute requisite to the completion of a design in small nails; but nothing can be more attractive than a door the panels of which are filled with a successfully designed pattern in copper and brass nail-heads. Let the main lines of the design be carried out in good sized round-headed brass nails, and the next series of elements of the design in brass nails of a smaller head. The background may be filled in with copper nails with yet smaller heads set close together or spread equally over the surface at intervals; the consideration most to be borne in mind being that the background should be covered about equally in all parts, or if the grain of the wood is sufficiently interesting, the background nails may be omitted altogether. ARCHITECT.

A DICTIONARY OF FURNITURE.

THE long-announced Dictionary of Furniture and Decoration by M. Henri Havard has at length appeared, and fully bears out the promises made for it by the Maison Quantin, for which Mr. J. W. Bouton is the American agent. It is a veritable encyclopædia of decorative art, dealing, not like the Dictionnaire of Viollet le Duc, with the French styles only, but showing every historical and national phase of decoration from the thirteenth century to the modern "revived" styles. The aim of the publishers is to complete the work in four large volumes of about 600 pages each, profusely illustrated, with about 3000 engravings in the text and 260 chromo-lithographic plates "hors texte." The first volume is before us, and we cannot do better than to give, in a paragraph



CRADLE OF THE KING OF ROME (SON OF NAPOLEON I.)
EXECUTED FROM THE DESIGN BY PRUDHON (IN THE MUSÉE DE MOBILIER NATIONAL, PARIS).



DESIGN OF A CRADLE FOR THE KING OF ROME, BY PRUDHON.

upon the hall below and remain unseen, if the screen or curtains are sufficiently heavy. The screen is formed by the balusters of the stair-rail, and above them, spindle work. This open work is carried about a frame or window-like opening large enough for a shelf and a few plants, or, if that is inadvisable, the space may be curtained with soft silk, as shown in the illustration. A great many patterns are possible with these little scraps of

or two, some slight notion of its actual contents. Under the heading "Alcove," we have a large colored plate of an alcove of the seventeenth century in the Louvre, with its balustrade fencing off the space for the bed from the rest of the room. Several smaller cuts show the development and decay of the alcove, that of the rocaille style being a mere hole in the wall large enough to receive the bed only, the curtains falling flush with the pan-

els of the wainscot. The author resumes, in a few words, the latter state of the alcove when in the boudoir. It no longer held a bed, but merely a sofa. Under Antechambre we have that of Marie Antoinette at Trianon, a model of simplicity almost approaching to severity. It is panelled to the ceiling, all the lines being straight. The panels over the doors are filled with paintings; a chandelier in cut glass depends from the perfectly plain ceiling, and the only other ornaments are a marble bust and a tall clock surmounted by an urn. The word Assiette leads to a learned disquisition on the several meanings formerly given to it and to a dozen or so engravings, six of them colored, of plates and saucers of Limoges enamel, delft, faïence and Chinese and Sèvres porcelain. A copy of an old engraving shows us an automaton of a Cupid perched on a piano, which is made to dance by the movement of the keys.

From M. Havard's article on Basins, we learn that it was anciently the custom at table for the richest, including even the king and his favorites, to wash the hands two or three at a time in one basin. The richness of the materials used for this service, repoussé silver being the commonest, and the use of perfumed waters, may account for this custom. The reader of Baudelaire, who may wonder why he should speak in the same tone of "une belle conscience" and "un beau batterie de cuisine," will find that up to Louis the Twelfth many kitchen utensils were commonly of silver, and that much later a kitchen service of polished copper cost 150 livres. A little butter-dish in Saxony porcelain is figured, having the shape of a tub and painted with a view in Holland, the great butter-producing country. This may give an idea to some of our decorators of porcelain. Of book-cases we have five examples, of which the prettiest is in the style of the Regency and the ugliest is a horrible Egyptian affair, much like a section of The Tombs prison, ornamented with sphinxes and "reduced colossi" of the

style of the Empire. Mr. Havard's first volume—to which we shall recur—does not go beyond the letter C.

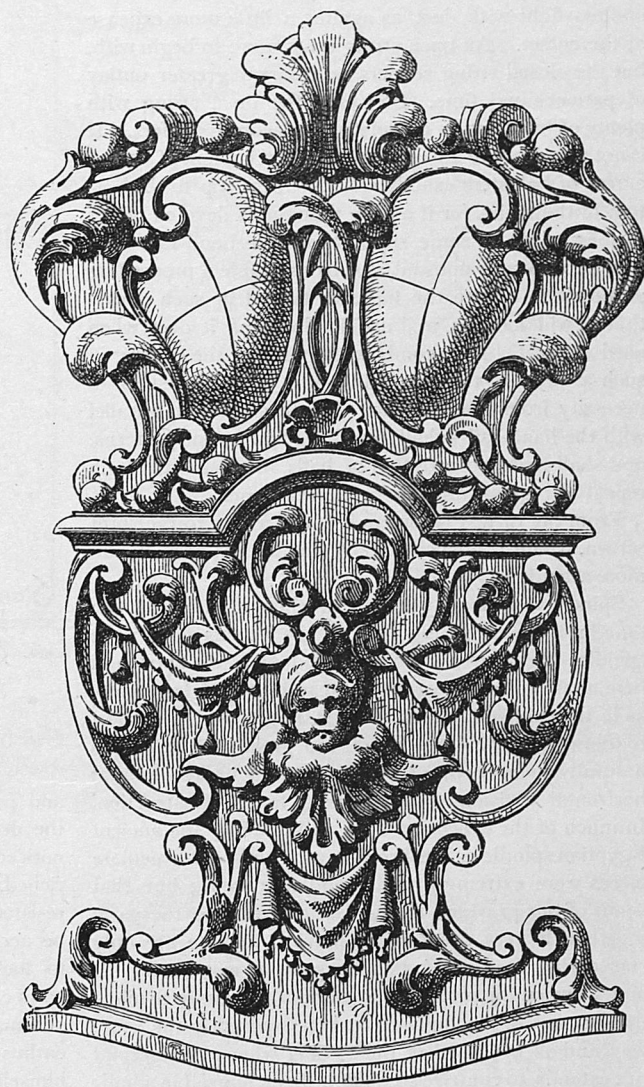
A HANDSOME memorial window by the Tiffany Glass Co. has been on exhibition at their rooms prior to being sent to its destination at Elmira, N. Y. It is in three lights, the central one having a figure of the Good Shepherd, and the two side lights being filled with grapevines and a background of blue sky. There is also a good deal of ornamental work in rich opalescent glass and glass jewels. The coloration is throughout deep-toned and quiet. The window is ordered by Mr. S. R. Van Duzer of Newburgh, N. Y.

SOME NOTABLE CRADLES.

THE cradle was probably invented by the ancient Egyptians or Babylonians; though with that indifference to infancy which characterized all the ancient races, we find very little reference to it. Those which we illustrate are of much later date, though sufficiently removed from the present fashion to make them interesting from an historical point of view. All are French. The older one, in carved wood, and with rockers at the extremities, is of the close of the epoch of Louis XVI. It is not a woman's fancy, and is hardly likely to please a mother. The somewhat heavy and disconnected though effective carvings are in the masculine style of the time; and paternal pride, rather than maternal tenderness, is to be seen in the choice of the family arms as a motive for the painted decoration of the head-piece. It may have been while nestling in such a cradle that Montaigne had Latin talked to him by his nurse. The ornaments of this one are gilt, and the background is painted red. The second figure shows the back of the head-piece.

The cradle designed by Prudhon for the little King of Rome, son of Napoleon I., shows no less a complete change of sentiment than of style. The winged Peace on the globe, at its head, is intended, as may be seen from the artist's first sketch, which we also copy, to hold up a crown of laurel leaves and stars, from which the embroidered drapery is to hang. The first sketch is far more elaborate than that finally carried out, but every one will admit that Prudhon, in simplifying his design, has improved it. The main lines have, however, re-

mained the same, except for the feet. Most of the ornament, even, is the same, the longitudinal bands in both designs being of festoons alternating with rosettes, and the perpendicular bands in both being ornamented with ivy leaves. As in most of the decorated furniture of the



BACK OF THE HEAD-PIECE OF THE CRADLE SHOWN BELOW.



CARVED WOOD CRADLE OF THE CLOSE OF THE LOUIS SEIZE PERIOD.

First Empire, the intention has been to approach classic forms, and Prudhon must be held to have been more successful in this respect than most designers, though it is unlikely that he was possessed of any greater archaeological knowledge than was enjoyed by his compatriots.